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By- Mahan, Thomas W.

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This supplementary report on Project Concern, an educational intervention program in Hartford, Connecticut, which buses inner city minority group children to suburban schools, deals with the nonacademic aspects of the experiment. Described briefly is the typical low socioeconomic background of the elementary school children. The reaction of the majority of suburban parents to the experiment is said to have been favorable, particularly among those who have had direct experience with the project. The suburban teachers have generally rated Project Concern students as above average in academic and social development and feel that they have adapted well to the suburban school milieu. It is "safe" to conclude that suburban pupils do not suffer academically when they are in classes with inner city children. Socially, Project Concern children have been accepted by the suburban students as any other child would be. (NH)

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PROJECT CONCERN

A Supplementary Report on Non-Academic Factors

Thomas W. Mahan, Ph. D., Director

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INTRODUCTION

Careful study of the patterns of test results of both control and experimental youngsters, particularly in the light of the size of the gaps in the original (Fall, 1966) testing, has led to the decision that no further report on academic gains related to involvement in Project Concern will be made until the two year sequence has been completed. This course of action is taken in the service of experimental rigor to ensure that any conclusions or inferences - even tentative ones - are such that the data cannot be attacked on the grounds of inadequate controls or systematic errors. This decision seems even more appropriate because of the consistent subjective evidence which is supportive of the Project and which can serve as a temporary guideline while more definitive, statistical analyses are completed with as careful control as possible. Also, the fact that the final data collection will begin early in May, 1968, and be completed by June 15, 1968, makes an interim report at this time superfluous.

However, it does seem that information about other aspects of the Project should be described at this time. This Supplementary Report is an effort to present, in abbreviated form, a picture of certain phases of the total operation other than those which are strictly academic. It deals with the following areas:

I. Social Background of Project Children

II. Suburban Parent Reaction to Project Concern

III. Teacher Evaluation of Project Concern Children

IV. Impact of Project Concern Children on the Academic Achievement of Suburban Children

V. Social Interaction between Project and Suburban Children

I. Social Background of Project Children

Children chosen to participate in Project Concern were randomly selected from those schools in Hartford which had 85% or more non-white population. This random selection was made on a classroom basis with all youngsters in the selected class being included in the sample so long as they met two criteria:

a) parent or guardian gave written permission
b) there was no recorded IQ below 75

The first of these criteria eliminated twelve (12) youngsters from the study while the second eliminated ten (10). Interestingly, a total of thirty-nine (39) of the experimental youngsters were found to have a Wechsler Verbal IQ below 75 on the Fall, 1966, testing even though no such score had been previously recorded.

Hopefully, the procedure used in subject selection created a sample which would be typical of the Northeastern "ghetto" and would permit generalizations from the findings on these youngsters to similar youngsters in Hartford and other cities. To make this goal more concrete a number of pieces of information on the 266 experimental youngsters have been gathered and are presented here.

A. Ethnic distribution

The ethnic breakdown of the Project youngsters has been determined to be as follows:

Negro	88%
Puerto Rican	10%
White	2%

The difficulties of definitive assignment to these arbitrary categories is recognized and the possible error in an individual case clearly exists. Nonetheless, the overall pattern seems reasonably clear and the per centages are directly correlated with the total school population in Hartford's "north end".

B. Family Situation

A major characteristic reported in the literature about "core city" families is the high incidence of family disintegration. Efforts were made to obtain from interviews with parents a picture of the family constellation among Project children. The following is a breakdown of the situation as reported by the parents:

Living with both mother and father	56%
Living with mother only	36%
Living with step parent	4%
Living with other than parent	2%
Living with father only	1%

These figures indicate that roughly 50% of the Project children come from intact homes while the others are scattered across a number of different patterns. It should be noted that an intact home is here defined as a home in which a mother and father are reported as living together. It thus includes homes where there may have been an earlier family breakup but where a new spouse has assumed the parental position. The phrase "living with both mother and father" should not be interpreted as meaning that the biological father and mother are necessarily present.

Another striking characteristic of inner city families in the Northeast is their relatively recent arrival in the area. To assess the degree to which Project Concern families are typical along this dimension the birthplace of the parent (or parents) with whom the child was living was determined and categorized as follows:

Connecticut	18%
North (other than Conn.)	6%
South	65%
Puerto Rico	11%

These figures are consistent with the reported trend and do suggest a recent migratory trend from the South to Hartford. They also raise the question about problems involving efforts to assist in the change from a Southern rural social world to an urban Northern one along with the attendant conflicts in educational experience and expectation which may be involved.

Another aspect of family situation to receive considerable attention is family size. For the purposes of this study family size has been considered only in terms of number of siblings and no attempt has been made to determine the total number of persons making up a household. The pattern for number of siblings is:

No siblings	0.5%
1-3 siblings	23.0%
4-6 siblings	44.5%
7 or more siblings	32.0%

Once again the findings are consistent with those reported in other studies.

C. Socio-Economic Situation

To obtain accurate and reliable data along the dimensions related to socio-economic status has been difficult in most strata of society and this study is no exception. The major basis for the findings reported here are personal interview and school records.

Source of income has been reported in this pattern:

Both parents	23%
Father only	36%
Mother only	12%
Welfare	29%

Among the fathers 5% are reported as unemployed, 91% are reported as unskilled or semi-skilled employees and 4% are reported as professionals. The pattern for the mothers differs in that 60% indicate that they are unemployed while 40% describe themselves as unskilled or semi-skilled workers. No mothers describe themselves as professionals.

This picture suggests that the sample is typical of low socio-economic status. This inference is further corroborated by the fact that 6% of the families own property while 94% live in rental situations. The total picture is of a social atmosphere beset with crowded conditions, with family mobility and disruption, with extremely limited access to occupational or financial development, and with crushed expectations.

II. Suburban Parent Reaction to Project Concern

An anonymous questionnaire was sent to two randomly selected samples of parents in three suburban towns to determine their interaction with and approval of Project Concern. The two samples in each town were as follows:

a) parents whose youngsters were in class with Project Concern children.
b) parents whose youngsters were not in class with Project Concern children.

This questionnaire was developed for a number of reasons with two taking the pre-eminent position. On the one hand, it seemed important to determine whether or not there was a relationship between suburban parental reaction and academic achievement of Project children. The other purpose stems from the strong negative feelings expressed by many when the Project was originally proposed and the assumption on the part of many that "bussing" was viewed negatively by the majority of suburban parents. Any answer to the first of these issues must await further data in regard to academic achievement. In fact, at this time only a general summary of the extent to which the samples express approval, uncertainty, or disapproval of the continuation and expansion of the Project is reported.

	With Children In Class with Project Children			With Children In Class without Project Children		
	Approve	?	Disapprove	Approve	?	Disapprove
Town A	51%	29%	20%	49%	27%	24%
Town B	58%	30%	12%	47%	24%	29%
Town C	27%	27%	46%	44%	17%	39%

(Overall return of questionnaire = 43%)

Although there are striking differences across the three (3) towns (and there are also intra-town differences from school to school), it is clear that the majority of the respondents express themselves as in favor of continuation and expansion. This suggests that in those schools where there has been direct experience with Project children most parents find no reason to reject or terminate the program. Indeed, the impression gained from reading the comments made by those respondents who indicated uncertainty leads to the conclusion that most of these individuals would express approval if fears about such items as overcrowding of classrooms, or regionalization of government could be allayed. In any event, the evidence is clear that suburban parents generally do not reject this concept of cooperative educational venture between city and suburb.

III. Suburban Teacher Evaluation of Project Concern Children

A persistent question which demanded some analysis focused around the problem of placing an educationally disabled inner city child with a suburban teacher whose experience emphasized the education of the above average child. Project Concern children on the basis of national norms were typically in the bottom fifth on measures of mental ability and achievement whereas the average suburban child in the towns involved was in the top fifth. Within this context how would suburban teachers react. The basis for determining such reactions was an anecdotal report submitted by each classroom teacher which was then coded by two independent raters along the dimensions mentioned below. The results follow:

	Superior	Fair	Poor
Attitude toward teachers	65%	26%	9%
Attitude toward suburban children	63%	25%	12%
Overall school adjustment	68%	24%	8%
Language arts progress	51%	26%	23%
Mathematics progress	49%	33%	18%
Reading progress	44%	31%	25%
Social progress	54%	27%	19%

The data indicate that suburban teachers generally rated the academic and social development of Project youth as above average. This fact is the more impressive when these ratings are compared with the anecdotal records which were available on the youngsters while they were attending inner city schools. The evidence strongly underlines the impact of environment upon behavior and behavior modification while it leaves unresolved the role of teacher expectation on pupil behavior. In any event, the overall teacher report is indicative of teacher acceptance of inner city youth and of these teachers' perception of inner city youth as being adaptable to the suburban school milieu.

IV. Impact of Project Concern Children on the Academic Achievement of Suburban Children

A major concern of a number of critics of urban-suburban bussing has been the fear that the placement of a limited number of inner city children who are educationally disadvantaged would result in a depression of the academic performance of the suburban children. The basis for this fear was the belief that these inner city children would take an inordinate amount of the teacher's time and, in this way, reduce her impact upon the other class members. Advocates of the program have argued that one or two learning problems in a class will stimulate growth by presenting a different challenge to the teacher which will result in innovation and increased stimulation.

In an attempt to answer this question two samples of youngsters in a suburban town were selected: 1) a sample of suburban youngsters who were in class with Project Concern children; 2) a sample of suburban youngsters in a similar grade who were not in class with Project Concern children. Each child in these two samples was used as his own control in that his achievement growth (as measured by the Composite Score on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills) for the year 1965-66 was compared with his growth for the year 1966-67. In the year 1965-66 no Project Concern children were in the school system. The two samples were drawn from six schools and growth rates for the two samples were compared.

	With Project Children	No Project Children
Growth greater in 1966-67	28%	24%
Growth the same in 1966-67	31%	30%
Growth less in 1966-67	41%	46%

The figures indicate that the trend is for children who were in class with Project Concern youngsters to do somewhat better than those who were not (although the difference is not significant statistically). This trend is found across five (5) of the six (6) schools involved. It certainly appears safe to conclude that there is no evidence to support the fear that suburban youngsters will suffer academically from the presence of inner city children; in fact, the available evidence is in the opposite direction.

V. Social Interaction between Project and Suburban Children

To what extent will inner city children, most of them Negro, be incorporated into the social framework of the classroom? This question posed another serious issue and one which could be viewed from several vantage points. Teacher reports suggested that the average Project child was making a very good adjustment socially; head count of the number of Project children taking part in various after school activities also pointed in this direction with 70% of the youngsters so involved. However, it was felt that a sociometric measure of the acceptance of the urban child was desirable. Consequently a sociometric study based on three items was administered in all suburban classrooms with Project children. Each child was to indicate his three (3) choices for each of the items which were as follows:

Item 1. Name 3 kids you would like to eat lunch with?

Item 2. Name 3 kids you would like to work with on a school project?

Item 3. Name 3 kids you would like to go to the movies with?

The results of this study can be summarized as follows for the Project children.

	% of Total Class Population	% of Total No. of Choices	% receiving one or more mutual choices	% with three mutual choices
Item 1	4%	4%	67%	12%
Item 2	4%	2.7%	58%	6%
Item 3	4%	3%	60%	7%

In addition the Project child tended to choose all suburban children in his response (partially, at least, as a function of the limited number of inner city choices available to him - never more than two). This table shows that Project children were selected in a proportion that was consistent with their proportionate membership in the classroom. In addition between 58% and 67% were involved in at least one mutual choice (i.e., where the Project child chose a suburban child and this same suburban child selected him) while between 6% and 12% had the maximum number of possible mutual choices. These data support the teacher's reports and the head count of after school activity which indicate the Project child is accepted as any other child in the classroom and reacts in that fashion.

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